

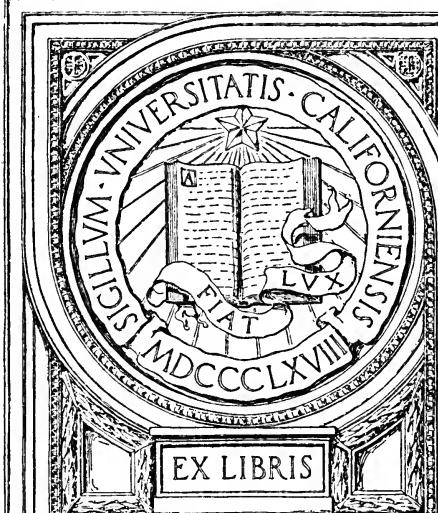
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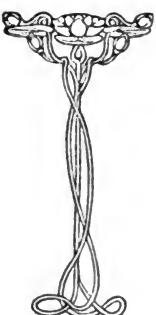
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# HOUSING CONDITIONS IN FALL RIVER



Report prepared for the Associated  
Charities Housing Committee, by

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# HOUSING CONDITIONS IN FALL RIVER

## INTRODUCTION

The present report on Fall River housing conditions is based upon an investigation made by the Bureau of Social Research of New England for the Associated Charities Housing Committee which was appointed on December 6, 1911.

The interest in housing conditions, under which many of the working people of Fall River are living, had its inception in a number of informal conferences held at the local Y. M. C. A., the Boy's Club and the Associated Charities, where the main features of the problems were discussed and which finally resulted in the appointment by the Associated Charities of a Committee "with powers to act."

After a number of meetings and discussions the Committee was convinced that in order to bring about permanent and extensive improvements in existing conditions, it was necessary to secure sufficient data whereby an accurate and intelligent estimate of the seriousness and extent of the local housing problem could be formed. With this idea in mind the Committee raised a fund of \$500 to cover the expense of a thorough study of conditions and engaged the services of the Bureau of Social Research of New England to carry on the work. The Committee in calling the Bureau of Social Research to make the investigation felt that an outside agency would be more likely to study conditions with impartiality, and that the wide experience of this Bureau in making housing surveys in more than a dozen other cities and towns in New England, commended it to Fall River.

The investigation was started about the 1st of February and lasted for six weeks. The facts herein presented are, therefore, of recent date and with very few exceptions are indicative of

the present status of the local housing problem.

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## FIELD OF INVESTIGATION

In determining upon the field of investigation in a housing survey three important factors must be kept in mind.

1. The amount of money and time available for the work.
2. The distribution of unsanitary housing conditions and their relationship to the tenement population.
3. The relation that the conditions found bear to the conditions under which the average wage earner's family in the community must live.

In preparing for the Fall River housing survey, owing to the limited funds available, it was found impossible to cover the entire city, but a careful examination of the city's tenement districts led to the conclusion that a study of the districts marked in black upon the map on page two would be fairly representative of existing conditions and would cover the sections in which the most serious evils exist.

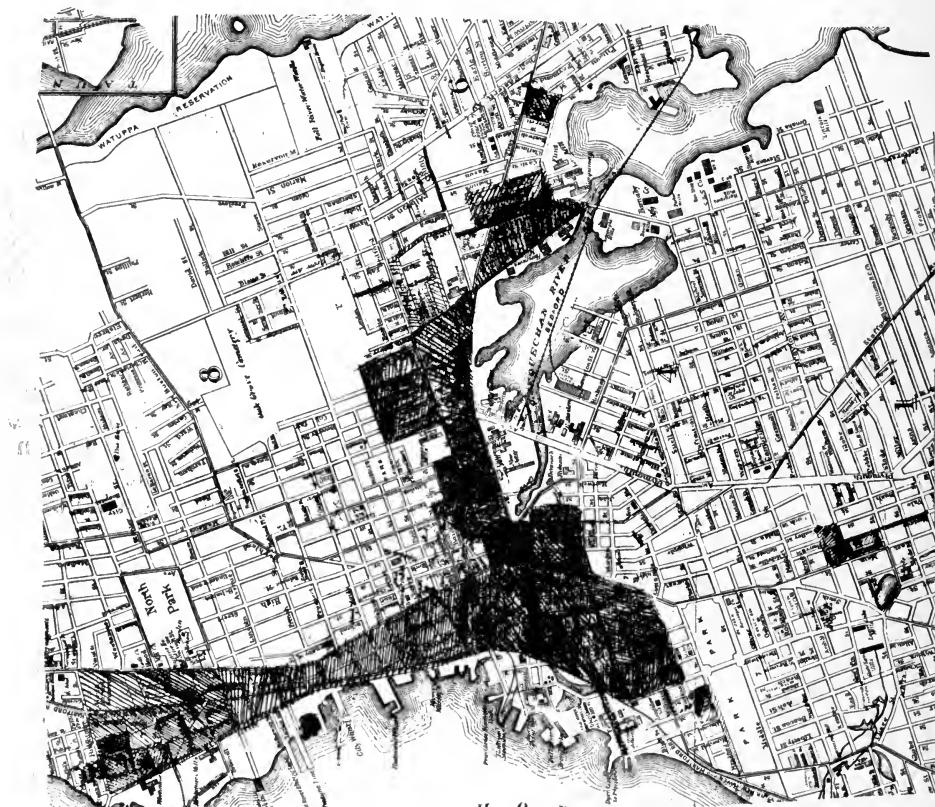
In all 279 buildings either in courts, rows or detached houses were examined. These buildings contained 1171 apartments with a population of 5980 persons or 5% of the population of Fall River.

The desire of the Committee was to ascertain general conditions rather than startling abuses. It was, therefore, found advisable in fairness to the city not to pick individual houses but to take whole sections and record both sanitary and unsanitary conditions, normal and abnormal structures and base the conclusions upon an average. At no time in the course of the investigation were individual abuses sought out and recorded without thoroughly

#### METHOD OF WORK

The method employed in the housing survey consisted of a house to house canvass in the districts included in the territory covered. The agents employed in this canvass were trained men with experience in other New England cities, and familiar with the housing laws and ordinances in force in Fall River.

Printed cards with specific questions



Map of Fall River, shaded portion indicating district covered in the preparation of this report

studying the rest of the district. A glance at the map referred to above will convince the reader that the field of inquiry was extended over a considerable portion of the city, which practically encircled the main business districts, and at several points penetrated into its very center. A considerable portion of the houses on the Mt. Hope Bay water front were also examined.

concerning the structural and sanitary conditions of buildings, the interior condition of apartments, crowding, etc. were filled out by the agents in the field, using a separate card for each building and for each apartment. The questions printed upon the cards were so framed as to leave as little as possible to the individual discretion of the agents, and were based upon standard cards used in similar investigations in

more than a score of other cities with such modifications as local conditions required. The original record cards filled out in the field have been placed in the hands of the Associated Charities and will be used as a basis for future investigation, as well as for the guidance of the Committee in its effort to secure improved conditions. In addition to the field records a large number of photographs have been taken, some of which have been reproduced in the body of this report.

#### THE POINT OF VIEW

In the planning and carrying out of the investigation the point of view of the committee, as well as that of the investigating agency, the Bureau of Social Research, was one of impartiality and thoroughness. It was evident that a program of housing reform is needed and the investigation was undertaken with aim in view of preparing such a program on the basis of the best facts obtainable, dealing not only with existing conditions, but with the legal and administrative machinery available, their merits, efficiency and fitness for the local needs. How successful we have been in carrying our point of view into the work which this report represents will be determined only by the constructive work that the knowledge of the facts and its application will bring about, both in a more rigid enforcement of existing legislation and in the securing of new laws and ordinances intended to remove existing evils and prohibit in the future the building of houses which do not comply with a reasonable standard of sanitation and comfort.

#### THE PEOPLE

It has already been stated that the investigation covered the homes of 5980 people. Their distribution according to age was found to be as follows:

	Adults	3006	50.26
	Children under 5	989	16.54
	5 to 14	1334	22.31
	Over 14	651	10.89
		5980	100.00

The above figures show that one-half of the population whose homes were examined were adults and in most instances the father and mother of the family. Of this number of adults 601, or about one in every five, were persons without families living as lodgers in the homes of their compatriots and friends. The significance of this extensive practice of keeping roomers will be dealt with later, but its extent cannot better be shown than by the figures above quoted. Sufficient to say that 251 families out of a total of 1171, or almost one in every four families opens the privacy of its home to persons who are in no way connected with its members by blood relation.

#### NATIONALITY

We have stated at the beginning of this report that while we did not select merely the tenements which were in bad condition, we did consider only the districts in which objectionable conditions exist in largest numbers without claiming that we have in any way covered all the plague spots which in all probability exist in various parts of the city.

If responsibility rests with the city to take care of the health of its people when native born Americans are considered, vastly greater responsibility ensues when the living conditions of foreign immigrants with foreign standards and foreign modes of life are involved. To show how predominant the foreign elements are in the districts covered by this investigation we have prepared the following table showing the nationalities of persons by the place of birth of the head of the family, where such information could be obtained:

Nationality	Members of Families	Lodgers	Total
French Canadian	1470	82	1552
Irish	787	37	824
Poles	457	189	646
Portuguese	1370	103	1473
Italians	145	24	169
Jews	187	32	169
English	282	17	299
Syrians	130	15	145
German	5		5
Negroes	19		19
Greek	4		4
Austrian	10	3	13
American	145	35	180
Total	4961	537	5498

It is interesting to note that of the 4961 persons whose nationality according to head of family was determined beyond a reasonable doubt only 3.2% were native, while 96.8% were of foreign parentage and foreign born. How great the responsibility for the care of the housing and sanitary facilities of these foreigners is, can easily be perceived when it is realized that the present investigation covered a considerable share of the bad housing conditions and that the distribution of population by nationality is such as the figures above quoted indicate.

When we consider the English speaking people separately from the non-English speaking population we find that the former represent only 23.5% of the population or less than one-quarter. Whether the general standard of housing in which the English speaking people live is higher than that of the non-English speaking is a question that cannot be answered wholly in the affirmative. In some cases the native born and the English speaking people do have better homes, but the distinction is to be found rather in the congestion and the general outward appearance of the structure than in the actual sanitary advantages and facilities which they possess. The lack of congestion and a longer residence in the United States contribute considerable towards the promotion of a better standard of home-making among the English speaking people, although many instances of the filthiest and most neglected homes were found in apartments inhabited by this class of population.

#### ACCOMMODATIONS

It has been stated in the introduction that 1171 apartments were examined in the course of the inquiry, and in the foregoing chapter the figures relative to the age distribution of the 5980 who occupy these apartments are given. What accommodations this six thousand and people have in these apartments will be discussed in this section.

In all 4239 rooms used for living purposes were found in the 1171 apartments, or on an average of 3.7 rooms

per apartment. The distribution of these rooms according to their use was found to be as follows:

Use of Rooms	Total No. of Rooms	Percent of Total Rooms	Percent of families having various kinds of rooms
Kitchens	1141	26.9	97.44
Kitchen Bed Rooms	30	0.7	2.56
Bed Rooms	2812	64.1	100.00
Sitting Rooms or Parlors	250	5.9	21.34
Dining Rooms	28	0.6	2.38
Attic Rooms	78	1.8	6.66
Total	4239	100.00*	

\* On basis of 1171 apartments

The above table shows that only 21.34% of the families have any kind of spare rooms which are not used as kitchens or sleeping rooms and that only 2.38% have a separate dining room. In all other cases the kitchen is used both as sitting room and dining room. This fact may be expressed more simply by saying that 97.62% of the families whose homes were studied, eat in the kitchen and that 78.66% of the families carry on the daily business of family life during wakeful hours in the family kitchen. The difficulty that this condition of extra use of the kitchen brings about can be well left to the imagination of the reader.

The thirty cases in which the kitchen is used not only as a sitting room and dining room, but where it is also used as a bedroom show a still more acute tendency towards untidiness, and further accentuate the problem of preserving privacy and cleanliness. In five such cases lodgers were found to be occupants of the kitchen beds, one of whom was unquestionably in the last stages of tuberculosis. The family dog and the children were using the same kitchen as a playroom. That the family pet was carrying the disease to the children and the adults of the family was evident from the fact that at the time of the investigating agent's call the dog partook of the contents of the open cupboard.

Of the 78 attic rooms only nine were actually in use in the winter months. In connection with attic room use it may be said that while they have their advantages structurally, and offer ten-

ants an opportunity to occupy larger quarters than they would otherwise occupy for the same rent, they are practically useless in the winter months because of the problem of heating. This is evident from the fact that only nine such rooms were being used for bed room purposes, the balance being wholly idle although frequently furnished.

The 78 attic rooms here considered do not include attic apartments which were counted separately in the cases where all the rooms occupied by the family were located in the attic.

#### ROOM OCCUPANCY AND CONGESTION

The discussion of the conditions relating to room occupancy or the relation between the number of people and the number of rooms has frequently been based upon the number of rooms in the apartments, as related to the number of persons residing in these rooms. It seems, however, that such an estimate, while fair in a sense, does not exactly express the intensity of congestion. Sitting rooms and dining rooms as well as kitchens, except in case of small children, are seldom occupied for any very long part of the day and this is particularly true during warm weather. The sleeping rooms, on the other hand, are occupied during at least seven or eight hours in twenty-four by all the members of the family and practically always at the same time. On the basis of number of persons per bedroom the following conditions were found:

Bedrooms	2812
Bedroom and Kitchen	30
Attic Bedroom	9
Total Rooms	2851
Number People	5980
Number Persons per Bedroom	2.09

The above figures seem to indicate that in general the apartments examined did not show any very serious congestion. When calculated on the basis of total number of rooms the figures seem to show a still more encouraging condition which may be expressed in the ratio of 1.4 persons per room.

For purposes of comparison the families with lodgers were examined with a view to determining room occupancy and it was found that while in the case of families without lodgers there were only 1.3 persons per room in the case of the families with lodgers there were 1.7 persons per room.

The fact that whatever congestion may be found in Fall River is due to a considerable extent to the evil practice of taking lodgers into private families, was especially emphasized when the population of twelve of the most crowded apartments were examined and in every case one or more lodgers were found.

#### THE LODGER

Considerable has been said concerning congestion due to the common practice of taking lodgers. A word should be added relative to the significance of this practice from the point of view of family privacy. 245 families out of a total of 1171, or one-fifth of the total considered in this study, keep lodgers. In other words, the lodger evil affects 978 members of private families out of a total of 5980 persons whose homes were examined, or a little less than one-fifth of the total.

The danger to the family arising from this widespread practice of exposing the private life of the heads of the family and that of the young girls to the presence of men in no way connected by blood relationships with the members of the household, is so clearly evident that comment can add little to the significance of the figures presented above.

The problem of crowding in the families where lodgers are kept does not seem quite as acute as might be expected when averages only are considered. In the case of all families we find 209 persons for each hundred bedrooms while in the case of the families where lodgers are kept we find 216 persons for each hundred bedrooms. By separating the families without lodgers from the total it was hoped that a considerable difference from the total average would be found, but the

figures showed that while in the case of all the families there were 209 persons per hundred rooms in the case of the families without lodgers the number per hundred rooms was only two less. This would tend to show that the keeping of lodgers does not necessarily increase congestion, but rather that the alternatives are either the crowding of the family into small



This unique cellar closet is "flushed" by turning on the faucet

quarters, or the hiring of larger quarters into which lodgers must be received to meet the higher rent.

That occasional abuses do exist and that in some instances the figures obtained in the course of the investigation were not entirely accurate cannot be denied, but even admitting a slight inaccuracy, the congestion in families with lodgers is not to be considered a serious menace from the point of view

of health, although the moral danger should not be ignored as one of the most serious in threatening family integrity and privacy. Instances of ten lodgers in two rooms, of six lodgers in one room, of two lodgers sleeping in the kitchen and similar conditions of congestion were found, but vigilance on the part of the Health authorities and an increased sense of responsibility both among owners and the tenants, should do away with these abuses with little effort and with little hardship to even the poorest of families, which could find larger quarters at a very slightly increased cost.

#### RENTS

There are many factors which determine the character of rent in various communities such as price of land, taxation, ownership, legislation, building traditions and the industrial character of the community. All these factors, however, are by no means as powerful in their influence upon the character of buildings as the standard demanded by the tenants and the supply and demand of tenements which the increase of population determines. In other words we cannot expect a process of natural selection to eliminate ill constructed and unsanitary tenements, when the tenants are by their very presence competing with their fellow workers for the cheapest shelter regardless of sanitary or aesthetic values, and where the demand by far exceeds the supply of such accommodations. The figures we are about to cite may possibly indicate this fact.

In order to obtain a comprehensive conception of the rent in Fall River the apartments were classified according to number of rooms, and then the average rental per apartment was calculated. The results are as follows:

No. Rooms	Apartments rented by the Week.			Average Rent of each room
	Max. Rent	Min. Rent	Total Apts.	
Two Rooms	1.60	0.75	6	2.47
Three Rooms	3.00	0.75	307	2.13
Four Rooms	4.50	1.15	199	2.02
Five Rooms	3.75	1.15	134	1.52
Six Rooms	3.75	1.50	52	1.61
Seven Rooms	3.75	1.50	30	1.77
Eight Rooms	3.00	2.00	4	1.35
Total	4.50	2.00	732	1.93

The above figures are of significance both to the social worker and to the tenant who might with intelligence apply the simple principle involved in these figures. It is apparent even to the most unstatistical mind that the apartments with the smallest number of rooms command the highest rentals per room. The two exceptions in the case of the six and seven room apartments are due to the general improvement in the quality of the apartments with six and seven rooms, while the four eight room apartments were of a low grade and isolated. That the families with the smallest number of rooms should be paying the highest rate of rent is not surprising, for the smaller the purchase in the open market the higher the price. The poor man in Fall River not only pays more for his sugar, coal, potatoes and most other necessities of life but also for the facilities for making a home, as shown by the figures herein quoted. Conditions found in several other cities like Buffalo, Providence, Springfield, etc. which have recently been investigated by the writer lead to the same conclusion.

In order to excuse this difference in the rental per room, owners frequently argue that the rooms in the smaller apartments are larger and should, therefore, yield a higher rental. Measurements were, therefore, taken of 136 apartments by rooms and there is absolutely no ground for affirming that the average amount of floor space rather than the number of rooms forms the basis for the establishment of the rental standard. It is also interesting to note that on the whole the average rental per apartment does not vary materially between cities.

The complete returns of the investigation gave accurate rent figures for 805 families. Of this number 732, or over 90%, were rented by the week and less than 10% were rented by the month. The comparative figures of rentals, while on the whole showing the same tendency as in the case of the apartments rented by the week, are not numerous enough to make the slight change found in the five room

apartment rentals any particular significance. In Buffalo it was found that the five room apartment commands a higher rental than the four room apartment and examination showed that they were of a better class. How true it is in the case of Fall River can only be surmised from the figures as the actual investigation did not yield data of value on this point. The figures are as follows:

No. rooms	Rent per Month per Room
Three Rooms	\$2.15
Four Rooms	1.81
Five Rooms	1.89
Six Rooms	1.50

The figures for the apartment rented by the month indicate practically the same tendency as in the case of the tenements rented by the week.

#### OWNERSHIP

The stability of the population and to a certain extent its thrift and industrial efficiency may be measured by the amount of home ownership. In the course of the inquiry dealt with in the present report an attempt was made to ascertain the number of apartments occupied by their owners. In all only ten families occupied apartments in houses which they owned, four of these families lived in three room apartments, five each lived in four room apartments, and one each in seven and eight rooms. That out of a total of 1171 apartments only sixteen or 1.3% should own their homes, indicates a condition which should at least be considered by those public spirited citizens who wish to develop community loyalty and stability as the safest basis for business, and industrial expansion.

#### CHARACTER OF BUILDINGS

The character of buildings in the study of housing conditions may be determined by material of construction, relation to other buildings, number of stories, location with relation to front of lot and the apartments per floor.

Of the 279 buildings or rows of buildings examined only five were constructed of brick and the balance are frame buildings of various sizes. In relation to the front of the lot 21 or over 7% of the buildings were rear tenements with the view of the street partially or wholly shut off. These tenements, from the point of view of repair, were found to be in very poor condition and the sanitary arrangements were below the average standard of the buildings examined. To this number of rear buildings, which were occupied by 104 families with a population of 611 persons, must be added the buildings in courts which are off the main street. Nine such buildings were found and the conditions which they revealed indicated a significant similarity between them and the rear buildings strictly so called.

The height of buildings can be best measured by the number of stories. The figures concerning the number of stories per buildings are as follows:

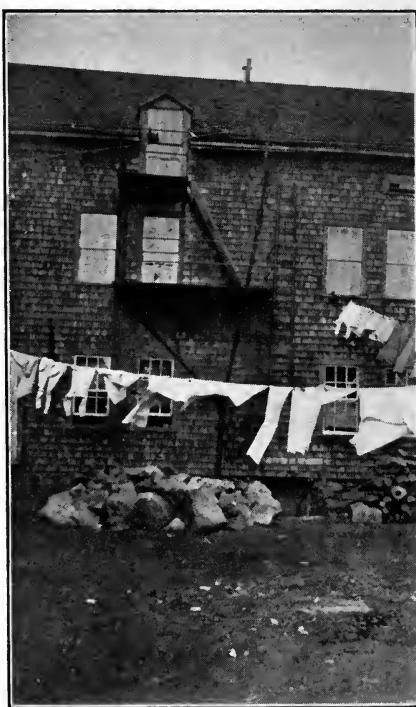
Stories	Percent of total Buildings
One and a half	0.5
Two	20.7
Two and a half	32.3
Three	37.4
Three and a half	7.1
Four	2.0

These figures would seem to indicate that the largest number of the buildings examined were three story dwellings. The attics or half stories were used as separate apartments in only seven cases, and for this reason it may be said that the two and two and half story building prevails since about 53% of all the buildings examined were two and two and a half story buildings.

#### FIRE ESCAPES

In connection with the height of buildings some consideration was given to the problem of providing fire escapes. No serious criticism can be made of the number of fire escapes provided, except in a few cases, where either they have become dangerous by decay or where, although the letter of the law is fulfilled, the conditions under which the fire escapes were built are such as to make them practically use-

less. In 74 cases wooden fire escapes are provided, in 27 cases while the railings are of iron the platforms are of wood and in some instances in a condition of disrepair or decay which would make them practically useless for the purpose for which they are intended. In two cases on the third story attics ropes were found which are intended for use in case of fire. In four cases the fire escapes are located so



A "fire-escape" with stone landing place

close to adjoining buildings as to make escape in case of fire dangerous if the fire should be on that part of the building, because the narrow space would draw the smoke and fire in that direction.

The encumbrances which were found on these fire escapes varied in degree from small quantities of wood and refuse to boxes of food and ashes, garbage cans, etc. Where the platform is solid the fire escapes are frequently used for storage purposes.

The most important objection to the fire escapes found is centered about

the wooden platform which decays with age and which, in some instances, is used mainly for storage purposes. In two instances fire escapes in three story buildings were entirely lacking.



A favorite use of the fire escape

#### THE LOWEST FLOORS

In the construction of dwelling houses the lowest floor whether that be a cellar or basement determines considerable of the stability and sanitation of the structure. A flimsy cellar will not support solid structures and a damp cellar will transmit its dampness to the rest of the building either through the wall or through the atmosphere rising through the hall and windows.

Of the 279 structures examined 13 had basements, one had neither cellar nor basement, and the balance had regular cellars with entrances usually from the interior of the lower hall. In only two cases were basements found to be used for dwelling purposes, while six others were used for business purposes. Of the latter four were saloons, one a bakery and another a produce store.

The ventilation in the cellars was poor in most instances and in 59 cases

the ventilation was practically nil, in spite of the fact that more than one-half of these as we shall see later had toilets located in them. In five cases the windows were boarded up to keep out the water and cold.

The lighting was quite as poor as the ventilation and in 127 cases it was difficult to see across the cellar with any degree of distinctness. Fifty-five of these cellars were almost entirely devoid of light and the experiences of the investigators in attempting to secure data concerning these cellars and the toilets in them were so unpleasant as to bear no description in a report of this kind. The forty-two cases of accumulations of rubbish of all kinds



A "damp" cellar

added to the difficulty of ventilation and in some instances the odors from the cellar penetrated the whole of the building and were so distinctive as to prompt the investigator to designate certain of the buildings as "cellar strong".

The amount of water and dampness found in the cellars varied in degree with each house, but fifty-three were designated as positively wet and in six cases the water was deep enough to make the entrance impossible without rubber boots. In one case while trying to take a photograph of a toilet in the cellar the writer found eleven inches of water at the very entrance and was compelled to equip his photographer with rubber boots in order to secure the photograph desired. In four instances at least, the sewer pipes had

broken and the sewer was flowing freely into the cellar. Two inspections at these houses at an interval of five days revealed the same condition of disrepair.

The odor of sewer gas was very common and in twenty-seven instances a note was made of this fact, although in many other buildings such odor was detected but was not considered sufficiently serious to deserve special notice.

#### DARK ROOMS

“Dark rooms” from the point of view of Fall River or any other of the smaller cities does not necessarily mean rooms without any windows, but any rooms in which the light is obstructed so as to make the use of artificial light necessary and where the circulation of air, although coming from the outer air or from a shaft, is so reduced as to make proper ventilation practically impossible.



A flooded cellar toilet

#### OUT BUILDINGS

In all 67 out buildings were found, of this number 29 were stables and in 16 chickens were kept. With five exceptions the stables were not kept in proper condition and the storage of the horse dropping was open to criticism. In one case a stable was found to be a serious nuisance to the tenants in the house and to the neighbors. The keeping of horses and chickens does not seem to be conducive to cleanliness, and in the summer if the same conditions prevail they might cause considerable discomfort and possibly ill-health, particularly through the breeding of flies.

The findings of the present investigation show that at least 105 of the rooms examined were dark or semi-dark, besides a very large number in which the light comes from narrow alleys or passages between buildings which vary in width from four to eight feet and in which on cloudy days it is impossible to read or do work that requires any considerable amount of light. The number of such rooms could not be accurately estimated because of the weather conditions which varied considerably from day to day in the course of the investigation. It must be admitted that 105 dark rooms is not a very large proportion of the total number examined, but with the open

space available and the occupancy of lot, which was found to average only 58% of the total in the 329 building lots examined, there seems to be no excuse for permitting the existence of dark rooms, since generally speaking their existence does not mean either economy of land or any special desire to adjust the interior arrangements to an exterior architecture having a particular aesthetic value. The dismal rows of buildings constructed without regard to beauty or to the convenience of the residents, in most instances contain dark rooms because of lack of legislation controlling the building of such rooms and also because of the absence of proper architectural service in the preparation of plans.



Dark bedroom with window opening against adjoining building, leaving an air space of only six inches

The distribution of the dark rooms according to their use is as follows:

Bed Rooms	94
Kitchens	10
Dining Rooms	1
Total	105

The dark bed rooms were used at the time of the investigation by 209 persons, 23 of whom were lodgers. That the number of lodgers is under estimated rather than overestimated we are convinced since reinvestigation of the same families at brief intervals gave different results and revealed the fact that the people are aware of the existence of some legislation which prohibits crowding particularly when it is due to the keeping of lodgers.

The ten dark kitchens were found in poor condition of repair in practically

every case, and in two instances they were used also for sleeping and eating purposes.

Of the 105 dark rooms examined, 53 had windows opening into the outer air, but these were obstructed by buildings which ranged in proximity from four inches to four feet. All of these windows were of normal size. Twelve of the dark rooms had windows opening into another room; in three cases these windows consisted of transoms, while in all other cases the windows were subnormal in size. In 24 cases the windows opened into the hall, three of which were only transoms and in 15 cases the windows opened into shafts which were covered at the top. In five cases there were no windows provided.

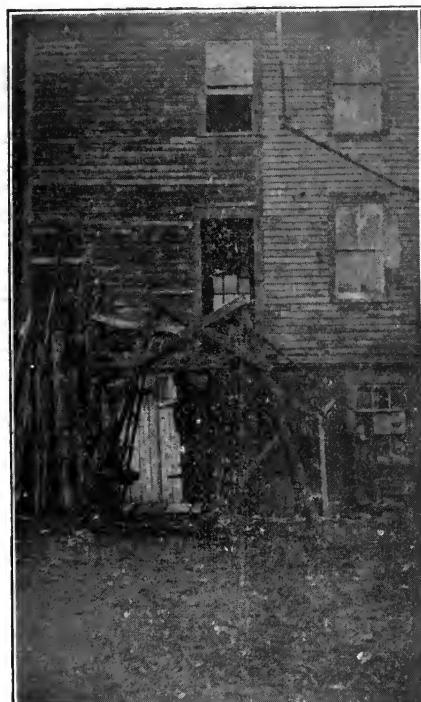


Dark bedroom, without any opening into the outer air

The rooms with hall windows were found in nine cases to be so located as to derive their air from halls in which poorly ventilated toilets were also located.

The cases where darkness is due to proximity of buildings bring out another important point, namely, the condition of cleanliness of the narrow spaces between buildings which cannot be cleaned because of the proximity of the walls. The accumulation of refuse between these walls not only becomes offensive to the eye but in time, through decay, pollutes the air which under the best of circumstances is neither sufficient nor of the best quality.

One of the most interesting cases of dark rooms was found in the Italian section of the city where the owner



Through the doorway may be seen the window of a semi-dark room, deriving its only light and air from the hall

desiring to increase the capacity of the building joined two structures and united them by a covered hall into which the inside rooms open. The small private halls connected with each

apartment which were light before the change was made have now become very dark and their ventilation has been cut off, in spite of the presence of the toilets, which are located in these private halls.

In the main the dark room should not be a difficult problem to handle in Fall River. More windows could be opened in most cases, and in the building of new tenement houses the use of common sense in planning, rather than a tax upon the present standard of lot occupancy, should prevent in the future the construction of rooms which are not amply provided with light and air.

#### TOILET FACILITIES

There is no problem of housing that has been so seriously considered by building and health authorities as the providing of sanitary toilet facilities. This problem involves not only the convenience and health of the tenants for whom such facilities are provided, but the health of the whole neighborhood and in its acuter forms the health of the whole community may be affected. The mass of laws and ordinances relating to this subject, inadequate and unintelligent as they frequently are, indicate a consciousness of public responsibility which should serve to solve the problems that exist at the present time in most cities. That Fall River has its problem will be shown presently.

CONDITION AND LOCATION OF TOILETS

LOCATION OF TOILETS	CLEANLINESS			LIGHT			VENTILATION		
	Clean	Dirty	Filthy	Light	Gloomy	Dark	Good	Poor	None
Hall	47	36	5	38	22	28	38	41	9
Pantry	54	17	0	41	20	10	45	23	3
Off Bed Room	12	15	0	11	7	9	11	16	0
Kitchen	225	149	15	172	46	171	191	122	76
Sitting Room	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Cellar	121	111	51	72	169	42	118	137	28
Sink Room	6	8	3	8	7	2	8	8	1
Sink Closet	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
Basement	14	1	0	7	3	5	12	3	0
Dark Closet	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Attic Rooms	1	2	0	3	0	0	2	1	0
Dining Room	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
	481	343	74	356	275	266	429	312	117

The examination of the toilets was made along the following lines; location, cleanliness, lighting, ventilation, condition of water supply, repair and number of families using them. The table above indicates the location of all toilets within the buildings, their cleanliness, light and ventilation.



The frozen toilet—a widespread evil presenting a serious problem. In room intended as a bedroom

It is to be noted that 384, or the largest number of toilets were found in the kitchen. This is undoubtedly due to the desire on the part of the owners to keep the water from freezing. The conditions under which these toilets are built, however, make proper lighting and ventilation impossible, and for this reason 171, or almost one-half, are entirely deprived of light and no facilities for artificial lighting are provided. One-fifth of the kitchen toilets are entirely deprived of ventilation outside of the vent pipes which in most instances were found to be doing poor service. It is fortunate, however, that being so near the place where the cooking is done and where in many instances the families take their meals, a certain amount of care is exercised, which brings the number of filthy toilets down to fifteen, by no means a negligible quantity.

In sixteen cases the partitions which separate the toilets from the kitchen were found to be so constructed that they do not meet the ceiling by from six inches to three feet, in order that some light and ventilation may be derived from the kitchen. Of the 16 cases of this type two were found to be in filthy condition and in one instance the water had been shut off to prevent freezing.

The most serious condition was found, however, in the cellar toilets where the freezing or shutting off of the water, and the tax upon the fixtures by over use, have rendered some of them filthy beyond description and wholly out of repair. Of the 288 cellar toilets examined 51 or over 17% were found in filthy condition. Only one-quarter were found properly lighted and 118 or considerable less than one-half have proper ventilation. In the 28 cases where poor ventilation was found, the condition of cleanliness and repair was invariably worthy of serious criticism. In nine instances in cellar toilets the condition of repair and the cold weather had caused freezing and human feces was found on the floor of the toilets and, in at least two cases, it overflowed into the cellar itself. In 35 cases the water had been shut off to prevent freezing and re-inspections of these premises at intervals of five days indicated that there was no effort made to provide the necessary flushing during the frost period. Water was found in three cellars where the toilets were located and in one instance eleven inches of water was found. In twenty-three cellars with toilets dampness of a serious character was detected.

The toilets in the pantry which were found so frequently (71) were, as may be noted by glancing at the table, not in the best of condition. The light was poor in 20 cases and 10 of these toilets were entirely dark. Three of the toilets had no ventilation. The cleanliness left considerable to be desired. The most serious condition, however, was found in the cases where the toilets were located in the same compartment with the pantry. Seventeen such cases were found and in three

instances the cleanliness left considerable to be desired. The shutting off of the water in four cases made the condition more serious, and in the course of the inquiry complaints were being made, that while, at the time of the investigation, the water had been turned on, during the cold weather the water had been either frozen or turned off for a period of from a week to six weeks.



"Open plumbing"

Sink room toilets were not found very common, but wherever they were found they did not seem to be in the best condition, in spite of the fact that the kitchen utensils were frequently left there and most of the kitchen work had to be done in that compartment. In three cases the filthy condition of the toilet, due to the lack of care and absence of water supply, was undoubtedly a menace to the health of the occupants of the apartment and in the summer would be a serious menace to the whole neighborhood.

The hall toilets are usually objectionable because of their location at a point where the occupants of the building have to pass, and because in comparatively few instances can proper light and ventilation be provided. Of the

88 such toilets one-third were dark and one-fourth were gloomy. The ventilation was found to be poor in 41, or almost half the cases, and no ventilation was provided in nine cases. Aside from the structural conditions which made proper maintenance impossible the absence of water which was found in 27 cases made the condition still more serious. That under the conditions, not more filthy toilets were discovered in the course of the investigation was surprising.

The toilets located near the bed rooms, sitting rooms, sink closet, etc. were on the average in better condition. A word must be said, however, about the two toilets found in the bed rooms without partitions since this type of construction is so rare and represents such a low standard of privacy as to raise a serious moral question. In one instance the father, mother and three children were found to be using a toilet bed room which was not in the best of repair and as is shown by the photograph indicates a lack of privacy that is truly alarming.



A toilet in a bedroom occupied by five persons

The practice of turning off the water in the winter months to prevent freezing and the placing of toilet pipes in such a manner as to make freezing in ordinary winter weather possible is a serious menace to health. In all of the 898 indoor toilets examined, 14 were found without water, due to the intentional shutting off of the supply on the part of the owner and 19 cases of freezing were discovered. That last winter in some instances this practice was perhaps necessary cannot be denied, but that the water should be

shut off for from three days to two months is hardly a measure that can be found excusable in homes where more than the average number of persons generally reside. It was claimed by the owners that the water is turned off only for the night, or that it is opened from time to time during the day, but every desire to verify this assertion proved that this practice was the exception rather than the rule.

The photographs taken indicate some of the details of the conditions found and all that remains to be said in connection with the indoor toilets is that they were frequently in a serious condition of disrepair and neglect ranging from a general dilapidated condition with bad walls, broken doors, leaking pipes, etc., to the overflow of feces on to the toilet floor and spreading into the cellar, pantry or kitchen floors. The latter cases were limited to only three.

The construction of the toilets indicated, in some instances, a desire to make use of every device which would save money for the owner and such devices were the cause of many of the objectionable conditions found. In one case, for example, the owner failing to provide a proper tank for the flushing of the toilet, provided a faucet which, however, did not meet the needs and made the floor constantly damp. In another case owing to the absence of flushing arrangements, pails of water had to be "knocked down" to flush a toilet which was in bad repair.

The outdoor toilet was not found as frequently as was expected. In all only 46 families were found to be using 20 toilet buildings located in the yard. These buildings had 40 seats. The cleanliness of these toilets was not beyond reproach, although under the most trying conditions some of the tenants showed a desire to keep them clean. Only 18 of the 40 compartments examined had locks and in nine cases the doors were found in such a condition of disrepair as to be almost useless. In two instances where the water had frozen the toilets were in such an indescribable condition of filth



Typical out-building

as to make them useless. In one particular instance twelve families were compelled to use one toilet because of the freezing of the toilets originally assigned to them and every evidence of such use could be detected.

In all 1171 apartments were examined and 898 indoor and 40 outdoor toilets were found. This would seem to show that not every family had its own toilet facilities. The distribution of toilets by families using them is as follows:

Number of Families Using Toilets and the Location.					
Location of Toilets	One Family	Two Families	Three Families	Four Families	Five Families
Apartment	436				
Hall	49	33	6		
Cellar	133	116	27	10	2
Basement	15				
Yard	26	11	2		1
Attic			3		
Total	659	163	35	11	2

These toilets account for the accommodations of 1144 families. The balance of the families were using whatever toilets were provided in the building and frequently imposed upon the neighbors. Owing to the condition of disrepair which was so frequently found particularly in the toilets used by more than one family eight, ten and as many as twelve families were found to be using toilets which were not properly ventilated and could in no way be kept clean. In one such instance the freezing of the toilets had caused the families in one yard, twelve in number to use one broken toilet, the water of which had been shut off the

morning before the investigation to prevent freezing.

Some of the conditions found were so serious as to require reinvestigation in order to verify the facts. When the report of the Health Officer was examined it was found that similar conditions in much larger number had been noted by the local inspectors and reported in the annual report. Whether anything beyond inspection was done was not stated in the report.



Toilet "facilities" on streets not connected with the public sewers

Evidences indicated that a large field of service was still open and that the law would be of considerable assistance in the solution of the problems, if properly enforced. Over ten thousand inspections made by two inspectors in one year seem to be recorded in the annual report for 1910. How much time was spent in court proceedings and how many of the evils were actually remedied might have been stated in the same report. Inspection without action is worse than useless.

#### SINKS

In a wage earner's family the work of the kitchen is frequently done under trying circumstances, the kitchen being used as dining room, sitting room, and frequently as a bed room. Here the children congregate and in the winter time the kitchen is the only place

where warmth is maintained. The sink is an important asset of the family and adds considerable to the facility with which the work of the household is done. It is, therefore, important to ascertain what the facilities in the apartments examined are.

Of the 1171 apartments in which the sinks were examined the following distribution of the sinks according to location was found:

Pantry	446
Cellar	7
Kitchen	524
Closet	192
Hall	2
Total	1171

The location of the sinks seems to be a matter of convenience to the builder quite as much as to the occupant. They seem to have been placed wherever room could be found for them and in seven cases they were placed in the cellar for reasons which cannot be explained. That the tenants found the cellar sinks inaccessible cannot be questioned, especially as the main water supply of the apartment was found in the same place. In some instances, where the sink is located in the kitchen, the place chosen has no relation whatever to the use and even the idea of preventing freezing by placing the pipes as near as possible to the stove, does not seem to have influenced the location.

We can easily understand how the pantry or some separate compartment isolated from the kitchen might be found to be a convenient place for the builder to locate the sink, but the location of such sinks in the toilet or the location of the toilet in the same compartment with the sink where the daily dishes are washed seems to be more than a matter of ordinary indifference. It indicates a degree of carelessness and stupidity on the part of owners and builders that can with difficulty be duplicated in other cities. Seventeen such toilets and sinkrooms were found in Fall River and other similar instances have been reported, but were not included in this investigation. In five such instances the water had been shut off for from three

days to three weeks, and in one case for four weeks.

Considerable of the time of the wife and mother is spent at the sink, especially where there are many children, and it would seem, therefore, that the proper repair of the pipes of such sinks would be maintained, but eleven cases were found where the pipes were in a condition of disrepair that made the walls and floors about the sink damp and in one instance a pail was used to catch the water that was coming out of the pipes in order to prevent it from running on to the floor.



The combination toilet and sink room

The shutting off of water in the winter months is a common practice among owners and the time during which water is not provided varies from three days to several weeks. In twenty-nine cases the water was found shut off and the statements of the inspector of health, who maintained that the water is always opened up at least once a day, made several reinspections necessary. Whatever the statement made by the owners to the inspector, the reinspection proved to our satisfaction that in ten instances, at the time when the owners claimed to have

the water open, the Health Authorities were misinformed.

The material of which the sinks are constructed was found to be iron without enameling in 87% of the cases. That such sinks cannot be kept clean is not to be doubted and the investigation proved this contention. About 6% of these sinks were out of repair and in some instances the body of the sink had been worn to a point where the water percolated on to the floor, making a bad appearance and interfering with the cleanliness of the room.

The construction, location and care of the sink is of considerable importance to the comfort of the family. The conditions found in Fall River indicate a certain lack of thoughtfulness and care which should be made the object of legislation.

#### WATER SUPPLY

The water supply from the point of view of water connections cannot be criticised since every house examined had connections with the city's system.

The location of the hydrants is of considerable importance to the family, particularly as related to the interior or exterior of the apartment. In ten buildings the only water supply available is from a faucet in the cellar. Twenty-three families derive their water supply in that manner. In one case the faucet is located on the street, in another in the yard, and in three cases the faucets are located in the halls.

The most serious evil in connection with the water service is the winter freezing and the shutting off of the supply to prevent the bursting of the pipes. To prevent such occurrences the owners shut off the water and in 39 apartments we found that the tenants had to resort to their neighbors for their daily water supply. A complete reinspection was made of all the apartments in which the water was found shut off at the time of the first inspection, and the number of cases had decreased to 31, and upon the third inspection it had decreased still further to 26. The claim that the water is

never shut off for more than twenty-four was not borne out by the facts, and while in some instances the tenants were encouraged by the investigators to complain to the Board of Health, it seems that few of the owners were in any way under the control of the Health Inspector, who had, as far as we could ascertain, visited only two of the apartments in question upon the complaint of some of the tenants. In 4% the cases the pipes were so small as to render the flow of water inadequate for the purposes for which they were intended.

#### PIPES

The construction of soil and waste pipes as well as drain pipes is carefully and specifically regulated by the ordinances of the City, but several abuses were found. In two instances the exposed water pipes showed a condition of disrepair which made their use dangerous to the building, and in many other cases the soil and waste pipes had holes varying from small openings about the base to large openings which rendered the pipes practically useless. In one case an exposed drain pipe was overflowing over the yard making access to the house difficult and unpleasant. Similar conditions were found in the interior of the apartment, especially the sink pipes and the plumbing of the toilet. Five and three-tenths per cent of the toilets appeared to have damp floors due to improper piping.

#### BATHTUBS

Bathing facilities in most of the cheaper class of houses in the smaller industrial cities are far from being common. The total number of bathtubs found in the course of this investigation amounts to only 32 or less than 2% of the total number of apartments examined. In only four cases were the tubs in a condition of neglect and apparently not in use, but in two of these cases the water had been frozen within a week from the time of the investigation. The majority of the tubs were in good and cleanly condition and the proverbial coal or potatoes

were not to be found in them. In three comparatively poor families the bath rooms were found to have little mats and were kept in very clean condition.

#### WASTE

The storage, removal and disposal of waste, especially garbage and refuse, are from the point of view of sanitation and the cleanliness of yards and streets of considerable importance. That the aesthetic value of efficient waste storage, removal and disposal is an element not to be neglected cannot be denied, but the field of investigation with which this report is concerned is so devoid of the elements that make for the beautiful in architecture or surroundings as to render any consideration of beauty a discordant note.

#### GARBAGE

All families have a certain amount of waste material which is subject to decay and is generally designated as garbage. The receptacles used by 937 families were examined with a view to determining whether they are adequate for the use for which they were intended, whether they are of wood or iron, and where they are kept. Expressed in percentages the figures are as follows:



The problem of garbage collection

Adequacy of Receptacles	Material	Location	
Adequate	65.77% Metal	Yard	73.3%
Inadequate	34.3 Wood	Shed	6.1
		Landing	10.4
		Cellar	5.5
		Hall	4.7

It is surprising that the city which removes the garbage does not insist

upon proper receptacles and an accessible place for the storage. That more than one-third of the receptacles should have been found inadequate either in size or condition of repair to hold the waste of the householders in the building is a fact that should not easily be overlooked since upon these receptacles depends the efficient removal of the refuse on the part of the city.

The regularity of removal could not be ascertained from the householders with any degree of accuracy. The weekly removal seems to be the prevailing practice, but little of any reliable nature from the point of view of figures was secured in the course of the investigation. Cases were found, however, where although the receptacles were placed in the yards where they were easily accessible, the city removal department had in all appearances not taken steps to do so. Nineteen such instances of a very serious

Paper boxes, or bags, broken barrels and the bare ground were not infrequently used by the tenants. In two cases troughs were being used and in several instances the tenants mixed their garbage with the refuse, thereby making its removal impossible. In at least twenty-seven cases the condition resulting from the lack of receptacles, the throwing of refuse into the yard or between buildings resulted in creating a nuisance which was clearly perceptible although the investigation was carried on in the winter time when the neglect of garbage is much less likely to become offensive than in the summer.

#### ASHES

The care of the ashes, while from the sanitary point of view not as important as the care of the garbage, still has considerable value in maintaining a cleanly condition in the yards and streets. Unfortunately it must be admitted that less than one-half of the yards or 46% examined had proper provisions for the storage of ashes and that with the exception of 31 of the receptacles provided all the others were of wood and 29% of them were in bad repair. In 23 of the yards no receptacles could be found and the yards were covered with a mixture of ashes and other refuse, in some instances being mixed with garbage. In the case of the ash removal little complaint could be made except where the receptacles were inadequate and their collection was made practically impossible by the lack of storage facilities.

While it is not the purpose of this report to deal with the method of refuse disposal a word should be added concerning the dump on Bowler Street which was found not only in bad condition, but where garbage and decayed matter of various kinds are deposited under the very windows of a large number of tenement houses and where the flow of water contributes largely towards the decay of the materials deposited. Complaints were made by many of the occupants of nearby buildings that the smoke and dust and odors that come from the dump are a



The back yard refuse heap

nature were found and in one instance the receptacle had been overflowing into the yard near the window of a tenement for at least one week. This latter fact was ascertained by several consecutive inspections and the photograph which is appended to this report taken exactly seven days after the first inspection was made is evidence of this fact.

That the broken boxes and various other devices for the storage of garbage found among some of the families were not of sufficiently strong construction and repair to hold quantities of garbage was apparent but nowhere were signs found directing the tenants concerning the care of their garbage.

nuisance to the residents of the district. Several children were found playing upon this dump and the general condition that it presents is well represented in the photograph.

#### YARD DRAINAGE

A considerable share of the property examined is located upon low land and is, therefore, in need of proper drainage. This is particularly true of the yards which serve as the playground for the children and as is the case with the eleven courts examined is the main avenue of communication between the street and the home. Of the 169 yards for which accurate data were collected 27 were damp and muddy so as to make access to the buildings through the yards difficult, or at least unpleas-

#### CONDITION OF STREETS

Frequently in thinking or speaking of housing conditions the street is forgotten, and yet upon the condition of the street depends considerable of the cleanliness of the homes as well as the health and comfort of the residents. The street is the hallway that connects the factory, the school and the church with the home. Where other playgrounds are not provided it is the playground of the children, and is the social center for young and adult alike, at least during the hot summer days and nights when the heat in the apartments becomes unendurable. With this idea in mind, a partial examination was made of the condition of the streets upon which the houses investigated are located. It was found



Tenements in a muddy courtyard



A city dump, foot of Bowler Street

ant. In eleven cases a sufficient amount of water was found to make the passage from one part of the yard impossible without getting actually wet. In two instances the yards were flooded with quantities of water which was overflowing into the lower halls. In these cases no sewer or surface drainage was provided. In 44 cases some surface drainage was found which took care of most of the moisture resulting from the rain and melting of snow. In one court with ten families, and in another with eight families the yards were flooded and the garbage cans, ash cans, rubbish and other waste were to be seen in the mud and water which covered the yard and where the children were at play.

that 29% of buildings examined were located upon streets which were either entirely without pavements, or which had dirt and cinder construction, with no lasting value and which yield large quantities of dust and mud. Forty-seven per cent of the buildings were located upon macadam streets which were of more permanent construction and the balance were located upon streets paved with block or brick or some other hard construction. The macadam road although better than the unpaved street is far from satisfactory, especially in a district where there is heavy traffic. The numerous cases of macadam pavements in poor repair, added considerably to the bad appearance of the streets, which do not seem to receive the care they deserve from the municipal departments of street cleaning and construction.

## REPAIR

The life of a building depends upon the care that it receives and the condition of repair in which it is kept. That many of the buildings examined were far from receiving the care which they needed and that in many instances the condition of repair was indicative of utter neglect, was evident when the investigation was first started. Closer observation and examination of buildings revealed the fact that 64 out of the 279 buildings examined, or 22.9% were so out of repair as to raise a question as to their fitness for human habitation. Broken



The damp hallway, out of repair

doors, ceilings with holes in them, a roof with a hole  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet by 2 feet which was covered with an oil cloth in order to prevent the snow and rain from pouring directly into the halls, broken walls and falling plaster, broken and dangerous stairs, broken window panes, and other similar conditions were found in varying degrees.

Leaking roofs were such frequent occurrences and were the cause of so many complaints that notes were made only of the most serious cases. A family of five was using a sleeping

room where the floor was found flooded on three different inspections. The walls and ceiling of the floor above indicated the same condition. Stairs only three feet wide, broken and without any other exit from the second and third floors, missing window blinds and completely broken down doors in the halls were not difficult to find.

Most of the conditions of disrepair were obviously of long standing and in many instances the type of repair was so rough and cheap as to make it short lived, besides giving the buildings an appearance of shiftlessness.

From some of the cases cited it is evident that the condition of disrepair was in some instances such as to be injurious to health and, therefore, in need of immediate attention.

## LEGISLATION

The most effective means of controlling bad housing conditions must of necessity rest in the legislative provisions intended for the control of such conditions and the machinery provided by the City or State for its enforcement.

In the City of Fall River two sets of legislative enactments are provided for the control of housing both from the point of view of construction and of subsequent care after buildings have been constructed. The Building Department has charge of the construction, the Plumbing Inspector controls the installing of sanitary arrangements and the Health Department deals with the sanitary abuses after construction. This distribution of responsibility, without specific co-ordination is not conducive to the best service in housing inspection and regulation, and the results obtained in the course of the present inquiry seem to indicate that a lack of co-operation and co-ordination of departmental work is responsible for considerable of the present evil.

A building before construction must be passed upon first by the Building Inspector who works entirely without the co-operation of the Plumbing Inspector or the Health Department. The Plumbing Inspector deals with his

side of the construction independently and when the two have done their work the Health Department is called upon to maintain a fair standard of cleanliness and sanitation in buildings over the construction of which they have absolutely no control.

Another important aspect of the tenement house problem and indeed of the housing problem as a whole is the lack of legislation compelling the improvement in old buildings constructed prior to the passage of the building law at present in force.

#### BUILDING LAW

The regulations relative to the building of dwelling houses as provided for in the Fall River Building Laws, deal almost exclusively with the new buildings and leave the unsanitary conditions of the old buildings entirely to the discretion of the Health Department which in turn has no powers to compel changes in construction unless necessary to remedy serious sanitary evils.

The only provision in the Building Laws dealing with dwelling houses which has any relation to sanitation is Section 56 which reads:—"All buildings shall have suitable water tight metallic leaders, sufficient to carry all the water to the street, gutter or sewer, in such a manner as not to overflow to the sidewalk." The other provisions deal with the resistance of the floors to weight and similar aspects of construction applying generally to all buildings constructed within the city.

A tenement house as defined by the Building Laws means a structure in which more than three families are living independently and doing their cooking on the premises. This definition is not only out of date, but has been abandoned by all the progressive cities, and in recent years New York has been struggling to change its ordinance which defines a tenement as a building occupied by more than two families into a definition which would include buildings with more than one tenement or apartment. In a City like Fall River where the majority of the families are living in two and three

family houses a definition such as is provided in the Building Laws is inexcusable.

There are no specific provisions for occupancy of lot, access to toilets, amount of light and air in rooms, air space per person, and the many other provisions which modern Building Laws usually contain. That such a condition is conducive to laxness in the construction was well demonstrated in the course of the investigation, but the responsibility cannot be placed upon anyone except the city authorities, who have not seen the necessity for constructive legislation to meet local needs.

#### CITY ORDINANCES

The following regulations deal with sanitary conditions of the dwelling houses and in some instances refer to other conditions which are directly or indirectly connected with housing sanitation.

Regulation 1. Whatever is dangerous to human life or health; whatever building or part or cellar thereof, is overcrowded or not provided with adequate means of ingress and egress, or is not sufficiently supported, ventilated, sewered, drained, lighted or cleaned; and whatever renders soil, air, water, ice or food impure or unwholesome are declared to be nuisances and to be illegal; and every person, firm or corporation having aided in creating or contributing to the same, or who may support, continue or retain any of them, shall be deemed guilty of a violation of this regulation and liable to the penalties provided by the Public Statutes of the Commonwealth, for violation of such regulations as the Board of Health judges necessary to make for the preservation of the public health and safety, and shall also be liable for the expense of the abatement or remedy required.

Regulation 4. The owners, agents, occupants or other persons having the care of any building or tenement used as a dwelling, or for any other purpose, standing on land adjoining a street through which a common sewer has been, or shall hereafter be laid, shall, whenever required by the Board of

Health, cause proper and sufficient drains to be constructed from their premises leading into such sewer by proper connections, and in accordance with the Public Statutes of the Commonwealth and the regulations of the Board of Health, and shall abolish and discontinue the use of all privy vaults and cesspools on the premises according to said regulations and within the time stated in a notice issued by the Board of Health, under a penalty for failure to comply with said notice of a fine of one hundred dollars.

Regulation 8. Cellars of stables in which horses or cattle are kept shall be built in a thorough and substantial manner and shall be properly ventilated. Should any cesspool, privy vault or stable cellar be located within 20 feet from the boundary line of the lot whereon such cesspool, privy vault or stable cellar is located, or from the foundation wall of any dwelling house, or within 50 feet from a well or other source of water supply which is used for domestic purposes, the Board of Health may require such cesspool, privy vault or stable cellar to be built absolutely water-tight.

Regulation 9. No person shall construct any drain for the purpose of conveying the waste water or overflow from any vault or cesspool upon his premises, to the public sewer, sidewalk, gutter or street surface, and all persons who now have such drains are required to remove the same, and no person shall hereafter allow or cause any waste water or overflow from any drain, vault or cesspool to flow from his premises on to the street or sidewalk or upon the surface of the ground, and no sewage, sink, or wash water shall be allowed to run or stand on the surface of the ground, but it must be conveyed through a suitable drain to the sewer, or into a cesspool made for the purpose, and all drains entering sewers or cesspools must be provided with suitable traps and ventilations.

Regulation 11. Whenever any privy, vault, stable cellar or cesspool shall become offensive, the same shall be cleansed. And in case the condition or construction of any vault, privy,

stable cellar, or cesspool shall be different from the requirements specified in these regulations, the Board of Health may cause the same to be cleansed, repaired, altered or removed, and shall charge all expenses incurred in so doing to the owner or party occupying the estate in which such privy, vault, stable cellar or cesspool may be; provided the Board of Health shall first give such owner or his agent, or the party occupying the premises a written notice and allow the space of at least 48 hours for such owner or occupant to comply with such notice, and such agent, owner or occupant failing to comply with such notice.

Regulation 16. When a vault, privy or cesspool shall be found to contain an excessive amount of tins, crockery or other rubbish, the health agent or inspector shall report the same to the Board, and a fine of two dollars may thereupon be imposed at the discretion of the Board upon the owner of said property.

Regulation 22. No person or persons shall keep fowl, of any kind, in any cellar, basement, attic or other part of a dwelling house or store; nor in any coop or henry within ten feet of a dwelling house, and all cellars must be properly ventilated to keep them dry and healthful; and no stagnant water or filth of any kind, will be allowed to remain on any vacant land, or under any building, thereby causing a nuisance.

Regulation 23. Whenever, upon due examination, it shall appear to the Board of Health that the number of persons occupying any tenement or building in the city is so great as to be the cause of a nuisance or sickness, or a source of filth, or that any tenement or building is not furnished with vaults constructed according to the provisions of these regulations, or with sufficient privies or water closets, or drains under ground for waste water, or from any cause has become unfit for habitation, it will thereupon issue a notice, in writing, to such persons, or any of them, requiring them to remove from and quit such tenement or building within such time as the Board shall

deem reasonable, and unless such notice is complied with within the time specified therein, the Board shall take legal steps to vacate and close up the tenement or building.

No agent, owner or lessee of a building or tenement which has been adjudged by the Board of Health as unfit for human habitation and vacated shall thereafter allow the same to be used as a dwelling until it shall have been put in such condition as the Board of Health shall approve and permission in writing granted by said Board for such use.

Regulation 28. All persons, firms and corporations having refrigerators or using city water from hydrants upon their premises shall not allow the waste water from the same to run upon the sidewalks or public streets, and in all cases where such property abuts on a street having a public sewer therein the owner, agent or occupant shall be required to connect the same with the sewer.

Regulation 29. No person shall deposit or cause to be deposited dead fish or the entrails or heads or any part thereof or dead animals of any kind in any street, court, alley, vacant lot, pond, creek, river, dock or any of the waters within the city limits.

Regulation 30. No person or persons shall throw or deposit, or cause to be thrown or deposited in any street, court, square, alley, public place or vacant lot, or into any pond, creek or river, any dirt, saw-dust, soot, ashes, cinders, shavings, hair, lime, shreds, manure, oyster, lobster or clam shells, waste water, rubbish or filth of any kind or the contents of any cesspool or privy vault, or any animal or vegetable substance. Nor shall any person or persons throw or cast or cause to be thrown or cast any dead animals, or any foul or offensive ballast into any dock or any other of the waters within or adjoining the city. Nor shall any person or persons land or deliver or cause to be landed or delivered any fertilizer or other foul or offensive animal or vegetable substance within the city unless he or they shall have first obtained the permission of the Board of Health to do so.

Regulation 37. Each estate or tenant shall provide sufficient water tight vessels to contain the swill until it is removed by the garbage collector. Such vessels shall stand in the basement or back yard, where they can be easily reached by the collector, and must be kept covered. There shall not be deposited with the swill any tin cans, broken glass or crockery, oyster or clam shells, old shoes, old clothes, rags, papers, sweepings, sawdust, lawn clippings, or any poisonous substances, which must be kept with the ashes as formerly, nor any dead animals which must be buried by the owners. Swill containing any of the above mentioned foreign substances, except lobster shells which may be deposited with the swill will have to be taken care of by the owners at their own expense, and any person violating this regulation shall be liable to a fine of one hundred dollars.

Regulation 39. Drain and soil pipes through which water and sewerage are carried shall be of sound iron when within a building, and for a distance of two feet outside the foundation walls; said pipes shall be thoroughly coated inside and out with coal tar, or an equivalent substance, and they shall be provided with suitable cleanouts to such number as may be required by the Inspector of Plumbing or Board of Health. They shall be securely ironed to the walls, suspended by iron hangers or laid in trenches of uniform grade having proper fall toward the drain or sewer. Soil pipes shall be extended through the roof two feet, open and undiminished in size.

Regulation 41. When it is necessary to lay soil pipe under the ground in cellars, it shall be of the quantity known as "extra heavy pipe." The length passing through the walls of the building shall also be of extra heavy pipe. All cast iron pipes must be sound and free from holes and other defects, and of a uniform thickness.

Regulation 42. Every sink, basin, bath tub, water closet, slop hopper, and every set of trays, and every fixture having a waste pipe, shall be furnished with a trap placed as near the fixture as practicable. No trap shall be placed

at the bottom of a vertical line of waste pipe.

Regulation 44. All water closets shall be supplied with water from a tank holding not less than four gallons of water. The flushing pipe from the tank to the closet shall not be less than one and one-fourth inches in diameter.

Regulation 45. There shall be in all tenements or blocks on streets where there is a sewer, at least one water-closet for every 12 persons. In no class of buildings, whether public or private, will water closets be permitted, in any room or apartment that has not a window having an area of at least three square feet or an air-shaft of same dimensions opening directly to the external air.

Regulation 47. All drains now in or hereafter laid as well as soil and waste pipes, shall be reconstructed whenever, in the opinion of the Board of Health it may be necessary.

Regulation 50. Subsoil drains shall be constructed wherever dampness of site is known to exist. When constructed they must be effectually trapped and means provided to maintain a seal and no opening into the sewer for the purpose of draining the cellar or surface water will be allowed unless by special permission of the Board of Health.

Regulation 54. No person, company, firm or corporation shall erect or maintain any manufactory or place of business, within the city, dangerous to life or detrimental to health, or where unwholesome, offensive or deleterious odors, gas, smoke, deposit or exhalations are generated, without the permit of the Board of Health, and all such establishments shall be kept clean and wholesome so as not to be offensive or prejudicial to public health; nor shall any offensive or deleterious waste substances, gas-tar, sludge, refuse or injurious matter be allowed to accumulate upon the premises or be thrown or allowed to run into any public waters, stream, water-course, street or public place. And every person, company, firm or corporation conducting such manufacture

or business shall use the best approved and all reasonable means to prevent the escape of smoke, gases and odors, and to protect the health and safety of the public and all operatives employed therein. Any violation of any of the provisions of this regulation shall be punishable by a fine of not less than ten dollars nor more than one hundred dollars for each offence.

#### COMMENTS ON LEGISLATION

Regulation 1 deals with the nuisances which are defined in the broadest possible manner. Under its provisions the most drastic and effective measures could be taken by the Health Department to remove existing evils. Unfortunately, however, such is not the case. Legislation that is not specific in the highest degree is seldom enforced for fear of inviting court proceedings and involving the law enforcing authorities in controversies which may be detrimental to the prestige of the department. Where politics are concerned such litigation is detrimental to the administration in power. Few are the officials who care to run such a risk and the public is demanding a degree of efficiency which is almost impossible to maintain under present conditions when laws are indefinite and the sacred principle of non-interference with private property is at stake.

The definition of a nuisance as provided in regulation No. 1 cannot be improved upon in wording, but its interpretation should be made the subject of local legislation rather than a matter of personal opinion on the part of the health authorities and their agents.

The provision for the vacating of houses unfit for human habitation is quite as forceful as that relating to nuisances, but the opinion of the health department is again the only authority to decide upon such unfitness. More specific regulations upon this aspect of housing legislation should be provided.

All other regulations as is shown by the above quotations deal with specific

unsanitary structural defects which were frequently found. That these regulations are far from being adequate for the needs of a growing industrial city like Fall River, the contents of this report should indicate. The few regulations dealing with sanitary arrangements are antiquated and the provision concerning number of persons per toilet is absurd since with the constant moving of tenants 12 persons per toilet may be a good standard at one time and a poor standard at another, may involve the additional building of a toilet with the addition of one person to a family. This provision is a dead letter and should remain so. The whole health code which relates to housing needs a radical and immediate change.

#### NATIONALITIES

Immigration is the most momentous social factor in determining many of the social and economic problems which face the economist and social worker, the employers and employees of this country. The cities, as such, receive their share of the burden of the immigrant problem in the increased needs for sanitary guardianship. The congestion of population and the overtaxing of housing and educational facilities endanger health and hamper the maintenance of a normal American standard of home making.

➤ The housing problem in industrial cities such as Fall River, Providence, Waterbury, etc. is preeminently a problem of immigration, a problem of adjustment between the facilities for home-making and the demand for such facilities.

➤ To have a housing problem is, therefore, not an indication of hopeless social mal-adjustment, but rather an indication of industrial progress. The insufficient accommodation for the increasing population is due to the characteristic American tendency to confine foresight to industry and to leave the private welfare of the individual worker and his family to the mercy of kindly but helpless reformers and charitable agencies whose problems

become more and more complicated as the demand for labor increases and skill becomes less and less a qualification for industrial production. That the efficiency of the workers, whether in skilled trades or not, depends upon the conditions under which these workers are living is a principle realized by only the select among the employers. The mass of them still interpret their interest in terms of low wages and complete indifference to the welfare of the worker as such.

The cotton and woolen mill cities have been especially characterized by this attitude on the part of the employers and the lesson which some of the recent strikes have taught us should not be soon forgotten.

#### CONCLUSION

In Fall River the housing problem is most emphatically a tenement house problem, in the New York sense of that term, since the average number of tenements or apartments per building was found to be 4.2 or more than the lowest number designated by law, either in New York City or in Fall River. The conditions found lead to several important conclusions:

1. The housing problem is not confined to a limited territory, but extends over a wide area embracing several sections of the city.

2. The congestion of population does not constitute a very serious problem except in specific instances and the practice of keeping lodgers constitutes a problem of family privacy rather than a problem of congestion.

3. Rents per room bear a significant relation to the number of rooms occupied by the family and the number of persons per room. This relation may be stated as follows; the larger the number of rooms the less the rental per room and the less the number of people per room.

4. The most serious abuses from the point of view of sanitation and convenience were found among the foreign residents, but abuses of the most serious nature were not absent among the native tenants.

5. The work of the Health Department as related to the conditions over which this Department has control indicated a lack of law enforcement which leads to the belief that the Department is either unable to meet the needs of the community because of over work or because of inefficiency.

6. The laws relating to the construction of new dwelling houses as well as the provisions dealing with the maintenance of old buildings are wholly inadequate to meet the needs of the community and the present demands for sanitary construction intended to meet the strain of large families and small apartments.

7. The Building Department, the Inspector of Plumbing and the Health Department have no close relationship and their work is carried on with such a lack of co-ordination as to make their service inefficient and in many instances conflicting. The work of the health department as an agency for the control of objectional sanitary condition is hampered by the inefficiency, carelessness and inadequate legislation of the other two departments above mentioned.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The only purpose of the present investigation was the securing of sufficient accurate data upon which to base a program of action which would bring about speedy and permanent improvements in the general housing conditions of the city and prevent, in the future, the building of structures which do not provide for a reasonable standard of safety, sanitation and privacy. The facts revealed in the course of the investigation have a decided bearing upon these three aspects of the problem, and a program based upon them should bring about results of a constructive character. In the light of the facts revealed by the present investigation the following recommendations suggest themselves:

A. The appointment of a Sanitary Inspector whose exclusive duty it should be to inspect regularly and at frequent intervals all the buildings

inspector should have specific powers as suggested in Section B. The inspector should keep a record of all the inspections made and record all conditions which are in any way contrary to the State Laws or City Ordinances. These records should be kept in the office of the Health Department and should be accessible to any physician or anyone representing a philanthropic agency chartered in the State of Massachusetts. Upon these records should be entered all complaints against property and the disposition of the cases whether by order of the Health Department or through the local courts. The said inspector should report annually upon the number of inspections made, the abuses found and the disposition of each class of abuses.

B. The City Council of Fall River should pass an ordinance changing the definition of a tenement from four to a two-family house and shall provide specific regulations concerning the occupancy of lot, dark rooms, fire-escapes, number of families per toilet and their location, and all matters pertaining to the safety of health and privacy of the occupants. The City Council should also pass ordinances dealing with the care and maintenance of old buildings requiring such changes as seem feasible and as are necessary in the light of the facts revealed by the present investigation. All owners of buildings, or their agents, should be required to register in the office of the Health Department the facts concerning the location, size, age, rental and other details which would indicate the condition of the building and the sanitary arrangements and location of them in the building. A penalty should be provided for failure to register the property within a certain time from the passage of the ordinance.

C. The appointment by the Associated Charities, the Y. M. C. A., the Chamber of Commerce and any other prominent agency in the city of a permanent Housing Committee affiliated with the National Housing Association whose duty it should be to devise and carry out plans for the securing of proper housing legislation and its effi-

## APPENDIX

The following conditions were noted upon some of the field cards filled out in the course of the investigation. They were selected with a view to indicating some of the prevailing conditions rather than the uncommon abuses that came to light in the course of the inquiry. The numbers of houses were not given for fear of offending owners, but they can be obtained at the office of the Associated Charities, 84 North Main Street, where all the field notes have been filed and are open to the inspection of those interested.

Central Street—W. C. used by four families, no water 1 week.

Washington—Dark kitchen and dark bed room.

Montaup—One bed room very damp, leaking roof.

Broadway—Toilet and sink together.

Columbia—Plaster and wall paper fall apart, owing to leakage, windows broken.

Borden—Toilet used by 4 families, seat broken.

Fourth—Yard full of rubbish. No inside stairs, outside stairs, narrow and unprotected.

George—W. C. filthy, no water 3 weeks, used by 5 families.

Orange—Dark, dirty, damp cellar toilet.

Montaup—W. C. in pantry, 4 people sleep in kitchen, no cellar.

Pleasant—Four dark bed rooms.

Lindsey—2 toilets in cellar for 4 families; no water for 2 months, no chain to lever.

Montaup—Partition between W. C. and pantry 3 ft. below ceiling.

Orange—W. C. in bed room.

Minto—4 filthy toilets in cellar.

Flint—W. C. partition 3 feet from ceiling in dark bed room.

Unity—Filthy cellar toilet used by 8 families.

Jenks—W. C. in clothes press in bed room.

Flint—Doors and stairs broken, general state of bad repair; ashes, rubbish and garbage in yard.

Pleasant—16 people in 4 rooms.

Bedford—Dark bed room has 2 beds, 2 lodgers, 2 children.

Robeson—Family of 10 in 3 rooms, 3 sleep in kitchen, 7 in 2 small rooms.

Robeson—Ceiling leaks, toilet dark and un-ventilated.

Robeson—Attic toilet offensive.

Green—Very damp cellar.

Tenth—Kitchen ceiling has big hole.

Summer—Room where 7 people sleep.

Platt—Sink drain leaks into cellar.

Orange—Water supply not adequate; rooms leak.

Orchard—W. C. in cellar used by 2 families, no tank, water received in hydrant and pours over earth floor.

Pleasant—W. C. in hall used by 3 families.

"THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER"

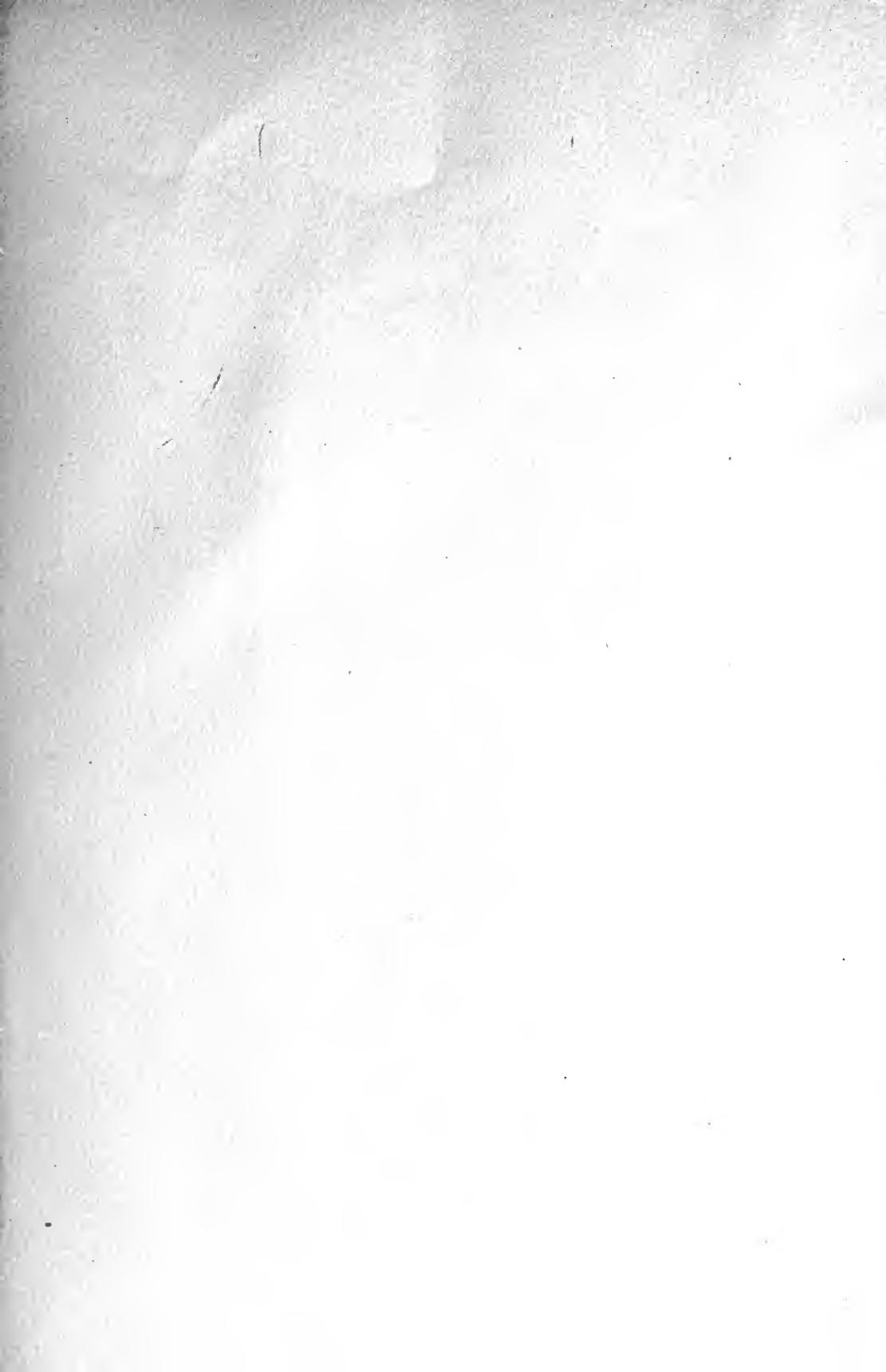


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